

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 SSM-03 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04
SIL-01 AID-05 /102 W
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P R 231136Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4983
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: LABOR PARTY CONVENTION OPENS

REF: TEL AVIV 1270

1. THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION OPENED FEBRUARY 22 IN JERUSALEM
WITH A CEREMONIAL EVENING OF SPEECHES AND FRATERNAL GREETINGS.
DELEGATES FROM ABROAD INCLUDED KREISKY, PALME, MITTERRAND
AND DEN UYL. MAJOR ADDRESSES WERE GIVEN BY SOCIALIST INTER-
NATIONAL PRESIDENT BRANDT AND PRIME MINISTER RABIN. THE
CONVENTION CONTINUES FEBRUARY 23-25 IN TEL AVIV WITH ITS
MAJOR BUSINESS THE CHOICE OF ITS LIST LEADER AND THE ADOPTION
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OF ITS PLATFORM.

2. BRANDT EMPHASIZED THAT ISRAEL IS NOT ISOLATED AND THAT THE
LABOR PARTY HAS THE SUPPORT OF ITS SISTER SOCIALIST
PARTIES. HE CALLED ON THOSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST WITH
POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO RULE OUT WAR AS AN
INSTRUMENT OF POLICY AND TURN INSTEAD TO NEGOTIATIONS

AIMED AT A FAIR RECONCILIATION. HE SAID ISRAEL MUST HAVE SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BORDERS. HE SAID EUROPE WOULD HAVE TO PLAY A PART IN ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THAT THIS COULD BEST BE DONE BY EXTENDING ECONOMIC RELATIONS TO REGIONAL COOPERATION. HE ALSO SAID THE SI COULD MAKE A CONTRIBUTION BY EXCHANGING OPINIONS AND TAKING INITIATIVES, "INSTEAD OF PASSING UNREALISTIC RESOLUTIONS."

3. THERE HAD BEEN A GENERAL EXPECTATION THAT RABIN WOULD LIMIT HIS REMARKS TO GENERALITIES, BUT HE DELIVERED A LONG PARTISAN REVIEW OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION. HE STRESSED THERE HAD BEEN NO CIVILIAN OR IDF DEATHS FROM ENEMY ACTION IN 1976 AND SAID THAT A RECENT SUCCESSFUL TEST OF ISRAELI CREDIBILITY ACHIEVED A WITHDRAWAL OF ARAB FORCES FROM AN AREA NEAR THE ISRAELI BORDER. ISRAEL'S FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S. HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED AND THE SUPPLY OF MILITARY HARDWARE INCREASED. HE WARNED OF DIFFICULT DISCUSSIONS AHEAD WITH THE U.S., ALTHOUGH THERE IS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING REGARDING MOVES TOWARD PEACE.

4. FOR PEACE THE LABOR PARTY IS READY FOR TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE. THIS CAN BE DONE ON THE BASIS OF ISRAELI STRENGTH AND THE UNDERSTANDING WITH THE U.S. HE HOPED CONDITIONS WOULD RIPEN SO THAT JORDAN COULD RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING SCENE--NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO TWO STATES ONLY (ISRAEL AND A JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN STATE) AND WITH A JORDANIAN DELEGATION WHICH COULD INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM JUDEA AND SAMARIA. HE CONCLUDED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAYING THAT THE NATION AND PEOPLE ARE READY FOR PEACE AND COMPROMISE BUT ARE OPPOSED TO PRESSURES AND FALSE PROMISES.

5. COMMENT: RABIN APPEARED LISTLESS AND DISINTERESTED THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS BUT CAME TO LIFE WHEN IT WAS HIS TURN TO SPEAK AND DELIVERED HIS REMARKS IN AN IMPRESSIVE MANNER. THIS IS RATHER TYPICAL OF HIS APPROACH TO PARTY POLITICS, IN THAT HE IS LESS THAN COMPLETELY INTERESTED IN THE PARTY'S FUNCTIONING EXCEPT WHEN IT IS A QUESTION OF HIS PERSONAL PARTICIPATION. HE WAS WARMLY APPLAUDED SEVERAL TIMES DURING HIS SPEECH AND ON ITS CONCLUSION RECEIVED THE LONGEST AND MOST ENTHUSIASTIC OVATION OF THE EVENING.

6. WHEN THE FOREIGN VISITORS WERE INTRODUCED, MITTERRAND AND DEN UYL WERE APPLAUDED MOST WARMLY AND EXTENSIVE APPLAUSE WAS ALSO GIVEN TO KREISKY AND PALME; THE GREATEST ROUND OF APPLAUSE, HOWEVER, WAS GIVEN TO BRANDT WHEN HE APPEARED ON THE PLATFORM WITH RABIN AND GOLDA MEIR. ALL THREE

EUROPEANS--DEN UYL, PALME AND BRANDT--STRESSED THEIR
SOCIALIST DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY WITH THE LABOR PARTY IN
STRONG AND SYMPATHETIC TERMS. THEY ALSO STRESSED THE
INTERESTS AND COMMITMENTS OF EUROPE AND THE
SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE PEACE-MAKING PROCESS AND
REFERRED TO THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS. BRANDT AND
DEN UYL URGED THE LABOR PARTY TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO
THE QUESTION OF THE PALESTINIANS AND THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES; DEN UYL WAS THE MOST BLUNT IN THIS RESPECT
AND SAID THAT A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT MUST TAKE ACCOUNT
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND THAT HE BELIEVED THE TIME HAD
COME FOR ISRAEL TO ADMIT THAT "THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WERE
ENTITLED TO SOME FORM OF TERRITORIAL EXPRESSION OF THEIR
NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS."
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